

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A bottom pad and leveler assembly for a loading dock comprising:

a first mounting bracket adapted to be positioned adjacent to a first end of a dock opening;

a second mounting bracket adapted to be positioned adjacent to a second end of the dock opening, the second end being displaced a predetermined distance relative to the first end;

a bottom pad extending between the first mounting bracket and the second mounting bracket for engaging a rear portion of ~~the vehicle~~ a vehicle parked adjacent to the loading dock, said bottom pad being vertically adjustable relative to said first mounting bracket and said second mounting bracket;

a leveler for facilitating the loading and unloading of ~~a vehicle~~ the vehicle when the vehicle is parked adjacent to a loading dock, said leveler including a ramp portion and a leveler lip pivotally mounted relative to the ramp portion on a distal end thereof for extending into the vehicle when the vehicle is not full; and

a clearance space formed between the bottom pad and the loading dock, said clearance space is adapted to selectively receive the leveler lip of the leveler when the leveler lip is pivoted downwardly to be positioned within the clearance space for facilitating the loading and unloading of the vehicle when the vehicle is full and the leveler lip is not able to be lowered into the vehicle.

2. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 1, wherein said first mounting bracket includes a first flange adapted to be mounted on the loading dock and said second mounting bracket includes a second flange adapted to be mounted on ~~a loading~~ the loading dock, said bottom pad extending between said first mounting bracket and said second mounting bracket.

3. (Previously Presented) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 1, and further including a first bumper mounted adjacent to said first mounting bracket and a second bumper mounted adjacent to said second mounting bracket, said bottom pad extending outwardly from said first and second bumpers for providing a resilient engagement with the vehicle parked adjacent to the loading dock for forming a seal therebetween.

4. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 1, and further including a bottom ~~draft plug~~ draft seal movably positioned within said clearance space for normally sealing a lower portion of said clearance space and for selectively being displaced from said lower portion for removing debris disposed within said clearance space.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to ~~claim 6~~ claim 1, and further including a bottom pad pan for supporting said bottom pad, said bottom pad pan extending between said first mounting bracket and said second mounting bracket and being mounted relative thereto for selective vertical movement for manually positioning said bottom pad at a proper elevation relative to the vehicle parked at the loading dock.

8. (Previously Presented) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 7, wherein said bottom pad pan includes a top angle and a bottom angle, said top angle is mounted relative to an upper portion of said bottom pad and said bottom angle is mounted relative to a lower portion of said bottom pad.

9. (Previously Presented) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 7, and further including a first flange member secured to a first end of said bottom pad pan and a second flange member secured to a second end of said bottom pad pan, said first flange member being adapted to be mounted relative to said first mounting bracket and said second flange member being adapted to be mounted relative to said second mounting bracket.

10. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 4, and further including a first elastic cord member secured to a first end of said bottom ~~draft plug- draft seal~~ and a second elastic cord member secured to a second end of said bottom ~~draft plug- draft seal~~ for selectively raising said bottom ~~draft plug- draft seal~~ into said lower portion of said clearance space for reducing air infiltration within said clearance space.

11. (Currently Amended) A bottom pad and leveler assembly for a loading dock comprising:

a bottom pad adapted to be positioned to span an opening in the loading dock, said bottom pad disposed relative to a floor surface of the loading dock for engaging a rear portion of the vehicle- a vehicle parked adjacent to the loading dock, said bottom pad being vertically adjustable relative to said first mounting bracket and said second mounting bracket;

a leveler for facilitating the loading and unloading of the vehicle when the vehicle is parked adjacent to the loading dock, said leveler including a ramp portion and a leveler lip pivotally mounted relative to the ramp portion on a distal end thereof for extending into a vehicle- the vehicle when the vehicle is not full; and

a clearance space formed between the bottom pad and the loading dock, said clearance space is adapted to selectively receive the leveler lip of the leveler when the leveler lip is pivoted downwardly to be positioned within the clearance space for facilitating the loading and unloading of the vehicle when the vehicle is full and the leveler lip is not able to be lowered into the vehicle.

12. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 11, and further including a first mounting bracket having a first flange adapted to be mounted on ~~a loading, the loading~~ dock and a second mounting bracket having a second flange adapted to be mounted on the loading dock, said bottom pad extending between said first mounting bracket and said second mounting bracket.

13. (Previously Presented) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 12, and further including a first bumper mounted adjacent to said first mounting bracket and a second bumper mounted adjacent to said second mounting bracket, said bottom pad extending outwardly from said first and second bumpers for providing a resilient engagement with the vehicle parked adjacent to the loading dock for forming a seal therebetween.

14. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 11, and further including a bottom ~~draft plug, draft seal~~ movably positioned within said clearance space for normally sealing a lower portion of said clearance space and for selectively being displaced from said lower portion for removing debris disposed within said clearance space.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to ~~claim 16~~ claim 11, and further including a bottom pad pan for supporting said bottom pad, said bottom pad pan extending between said first mounting bracket and said second mounting bracket and being mounted relative thereto for selective vertical movement for manually positioning said bottom pad at a proper elevation relative to the vehicle parked at the loading dock.

18. (Previously Presented) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 17, wherein said bottom pad pan includes a top angle and a bottom angle, said top angle is mounted relative to an upper portion of said bottom pad and said bottom angle is mounted relative to a lower portion of said bottom pad.

19. (Previously Presented) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 17, and further including a first flange member secured to a first end of said bottom pad pan and a second flange member secured to a second end of said bottom pad pan, said first flange member being adapted to be mounted relative to said first mounting bracket and said second flange member being adapted to be mounted relative to said second mounting bracket.

20. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 14, and further including a first elastic cord member secured to a first end of said bottom ~~draft plug-draft seal~~ and a second elastic cord member secured to a second end of said bottom ~~draft plug-draft seal~~ for selectively raising said bottom ~~draft plug-draft seal~~ into said lower portion of the clearance space for reducing air infiltration within said clearance space.

21. (Currently Amended) The bottom pad and leveler assembly according to claim 14, wherein said bottom ~~draft plug-draft seal~~ is selectively pushed down out of said clearance space to allow debris disposed within said clearance space to drop out.